

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 OMB-01 DRC-01 /102 W
----- 072840

R 101610Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9276

INFO AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS UNN

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L COPENHAGEN 1882

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, DA

SUBJ: POPULAR SUPPORT FOR HARTLING GOVERNMENT INCREASING

SUMMARY. TWO RECENT POLLS INDICATE THAT MODERATE LIBERAL
GOVERNMENT PARTY HAS INCREASED ITS POPULAR SUPPORT
SUBSTANTIALLY IN RECENT WEEKS. THIS TREND MAY INDUCE
PRIME MINISTER HARTLING TO FAVOR AN ELECTION THIS FALL.
END SUMMARY.

1. TWO RECENT POPULAR OPINION POLLS, BORSEN'S AIM
(DATA COLLECTED IN MID-JUNE) AND GALLUP (DATA GATHERED
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JUNE 1-18), INDICATE THAT PRIMIN POUL HARTLING'S MODERATE

LIBERAL PARTY WOULD DISPLACE MOGENS GLISTRUP'S PROGRESS PARTY AS DENMARK'S SECOND LARGEST PARTY IF ELECTIONS WERE HELD SOON. BASED ON STANDARD POLL QUESTION "WHICH PARTY WOULD YOU VOTE FOR IF ELECTIONS HELD NOW?" MODERATE LIBERALS REGISTERED 23.4 PER CENT IN AIM POLL, NEARLY DOUBLE THE 12.3 PER CENT VOTE PARTY ACTUALLY OBTAINED IN DECEMBER 4 ELECTION. THIS WAS ONLY 2.3 PER CENT LESS THAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATS GARNERED (25.7 PER CENT) IN SAME POLL, LEADING BORSEN TO SPECULATE THAT HARLING'S PARTY WAS ON ITS WAY TO BECOMING DENMARK'S LARGEST.

2. THE AIM POLL IS BASED, HOWEVER, ON ONE-TIME TELEPHONE SURVEY AND TENDS TO BE MORE ERRATIC THAN GALLUP WHICH GATHERS ITS DATA OVER LONGER PERIOD BY MAIL. NEVERTHELESS, GALLUP GAVE MODERATE LIBERALS 17.7 PER CENT, AN EXTREMELY RESPECTABLE ADVANCE DURING THE GOVERNMENT'S SEVEN MONTHS IN OFFICE. THIS FIGURE MIGHT EVEN BE ON THE LOW SIDE SINCE TWO OTHER POLLS OBSERVA AND VILSTRUP (WITH MAY DATA) BOTH GAVE MODERATEULIBERALS 20 PER CENT.

3. RESULTS OF ALL FOUR MOST RECENT POLLS ARE SHOWN BELOW, WITH FIRST COLUMN REPRESENTING VOTE IN DECEMBER 4 ELECTION.

	IN PER CENT					
	ELECTION					
	RESULTS	OBSERVA	VILSTRUP	AIM	GALLUP	
	4/12	20/5	21/5	30/5-1/6	1-18/6	
	10-12/6					
SOCDEM	25.6	31	30	25.7	29.4	
RADICAL	11.2	8	7	9.7	9.0	
CONSERVATIVE	9.2	8	8	8.0	7.6	
JUSTICE	2.9	3	2	2.5	-	
SOCPEOPLES	6.0	5	6	4.98	5.7	
COMMUNIST	3.6	5	7	4.7	5.6	
CENTERDEM	7.8	2	3	1.9	2.8	
CHRISTIAN	4.0	4	5	5.2	4.8	
MODLIBERAL	12.3	20	20	23.4	17.7	
LEFTSOC	1.5	2	2	1.8	-	
PROGRESS	15.9	12	10	12.3	13.8	

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OTHER	-	-	-	-	3.6
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4. ALSO NOTEWORTHY IN THE RECENT POLLS ARE THE DECLINE OF THE CENTER DEMOCRATS, WHO ARE NOW BARELY ABOVE THE TWO PER CENT THRESHOLD REQUIRED FOR FOLKETING REPRESENTATION, AND THE DIMINISHING OF COMMUNIST SUPPORT TO ITS NORMAL 5-6 PER CENT LEVEL. IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE SEVEN-DAY CRISIS IN MAY COMMUNIST SUPPORT INCREASED TO 10 PER CENT, WHILE

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC STRENGTH CORRESPONDINGLY FELL TO 25.

5. THE DANISH ELECTORATE HAS CLEARLY BEEN IMPRESSED BY THE HARTLING GOVERNMENT'S ABILITY TO TAKE NECESSARY ACTION, DESPITE ITS NARROW 22-SEAT REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT, AND WITH OR WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS. THE PARTY'S SUCCESS IN PRESSING THROUGH THE FORCED SAVINGS COMPROMISE IN FEBRUARY, THE EXCISE TAX PACKAGE IN MAY, AND THE FIVE-PARTY HOUSING COMPROMISE IN THE CLOSING DAYS OF THE PARLIAMENTARY SESSION IN JUNE WERE, IN FACT, IMPRESSIVE TACTICAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS. THE MODERATE LIBERALS SEIZED GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY PRIMARILY TO REVERSE THE LONG (SINCE 1957), STEADY DECLINE IN POPULAR SUPPORT, REFLECTING THE CONSTANTLY DECREASING FARM POPULATION. THEIR BELIEF THAT GOVERNMENT POWER WOULD GIVE THE PARTY AN APPEAL AMONG URBAN VOTERS HAS THUS BEEN FULFILLED AND THE TEMPTATION IS GREAT TO CASH IN ON THEIR PRESENT POPULARITY. THE PARTY'S CURRENT 20 PER CENT SUPPORT WOULD MEAN APPROXIMATELY 36 SEATS IN THE 179-SEAT PARLIAMENT.

6. MOREOVER, THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS HAVE RECENTLY RAISED THE DEMAND FOR "ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY" AS THEIR PRICE FOR ACCEPTING AN INCOMES POLICY IN CONNECTION WITH THE GENERAL ECONOMIC COMPROMISE TO BE WORKED OUT THIS FALL. SHOULD THE SEPTEMBER EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE FOLKETING FAIL, DUE TO THIS SOCDEM DEMAND, HARLING COULD FORCE HIS MAJOR OPPONENTS ONTO WEAK GROUND BY CALLING ELECTIONS IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER, SINCE ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY HAS NOT PROVED PARTICULARLY POPULAR AMONG SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC VOTERS. IN SUM, THE HARTLING GOVERNMENT WILL BE NEGOTIATING FROM STRENGTH

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THIS FALL AND MAY WELL DECIDE TO HAZARD CONTINUED GOVERNMENT POWER FOR TANGIBLE PARLIAMENTARY GAINS IN AN OCTOBER ELECTION.

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